

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE
WILDLIFE SERVICES**

**DECISION
AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**Management of Beaver Damage to Agriculture and
Other Resources Within the State of Louisiana**

**USDA/APHIS/WS
P.O. Box 589
Port Allen, La 70767
(504) 389-0229**

The proposed action is to implement an integrated wildlife damage management strategy to protect agriculture and other valuable resources from damage by beaver in the State of Louisiana. This strategy incorporates both technical assistance and direct control via physical exclusion, habitat management by water level manipulation, and population management through lethal control. All available tools would be given careful consideration when beaver control projects are planned.

I have carefully reviewed the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for this proposal, and it is my determination that the proposed action does not constitute a major Federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. As such, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. Therefore, it is my decision to implement the preferred action described in the EA. This determination is based on the following:

1. The proposed action and its effects would be confined to site-specific beaver-damage areas in Louisiana and would not be regional or national in scope.
2. The adverse impacts of beaver management activities on the human environment would not be significant. Positive benefits, however, would accrue. The proposed action's effects on human health and safety would be minimal. Control methods described by the proposed alternative would not compromise the safety of either the public or individuals conducting beaver damage management. Protection of roads, dams on man-made impoundments, levees, and ditches and drainages would also enhance the protection of human health and safety.

3. Characteristics of park land, farm land, wild and scenic areas, ecologically unique areas, historical sites, and other unique physical features of the existing environment would not be adversely affected.
4. The effects of the proposed action on the quality of the human environment would not be controversial.
5. Standard precautionary measures used by WS, which include safeguards for protecting humans and nontarget species, would minimize and mitigate any unforeseen adverse impacts and unknown or unidentified environmental risks.
6. The proposed action would not set a precedent for any future actions having significant environmental effects. Any actions not addressed in this EA would be assessed in a separate analysis.
7. The number of animals affected by the proposed action is small in comparison to the total population. Effects on wildlife and fish and their habitat would be minimal.
8. There would be no significant cumulative effects resulting from this project and other actions implemented or planned within the area covered by the EA.
9. Beaver damage management described in the proposed action would have no significant adverse impacts on threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat, however, some positive benefits could accrue.
10. Proposed beaver management activities would have no negative impacts on cultural or historical resources. In some cases, WS activities would protect archaeological, historical, and other cultural resources.
11. All Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, as well as USDA, APHIS, and WS policies, pertaining to environmental protection would be observed.

Additional copies of the EA are available upon request from the WS office identified above.

/s/

10/28/97

Gary E. Larson, Director
WS Eastern Region

Date